

State of South Carolina Office of the Governor

MARK SANFORD
GOVERNOR

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May 28, 2010

The Honorable André Bauer
President of the Senate
State House, First Floor, East Wing
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Mr. President and Members of the Senate:

I am hereby vetoing and returning without my approval S. 1363, R. 234, which makes some modifications to the existing National Board Certification (NBC) program that offers South Carolina teachers who have already received the \$7,500 annual incentive for 10 years to receive the incentive for yet another 10 years. While we applaud the General Assembly for recognizing that the current program is unsustainable and for proposing some changes to the program, we simply believe that the modifications included in this bill are not far-reaching enough to justify allowing this bill to become law.

As we have consistently stated throughout our administration, we admire and support the important work that teachers do to educate and prepare our children for a productive future – and have often backed up our words with action. For example, until the recent economic downturn, our administration fully funded the Base Student Cost in each of our Executive Budgets. Given the scarcity of resources currently available when drafting state budgets, and the even greater challenges that lie in the near future, we believe it is important to assess every program to ensure that every dollar is being directed toward effective programs in the classroom and toward teachers.

This year, the NBC program will cost the state \$60 million – up 25 percent from four years ago. While the program was certainly well-intended at its inception, we believe that in the current budget climate, the NBC program and the rapid expansion of its costs are having a detrimental impact on K-12 education in South Carolina. The Base Student Cost is slated to be cut by \$85 million dollars in the budget passed by the Conference Committee, leading some to speculate that an estimated 2,000 teachers could lose their jobs due to budget cuts. While it might be ideal to have an NBC teacher in every classroom in every school in the state, we believe it is more important to have a teacher in each classroom. Data received from the South Carolina Department of Education estimates that the average salary (with fringe benefits) is \$59,880. If

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the state were to direct the funding for the NBC program toward the Base Student Cost, over 1,000 teacher salaries could be funded.


While we realize that it is not practical to shut down the entire NBC program this year, we do not believe that extending the opportunity for current recipients to receive a second 10-year supplement (at \$7,500 per year) is sound fiscal policy given the budget challenges that we will be facing for the foreseeable future. If the 6,716 teachers currently receiving the certification seek an additional 10-year incentive, the state will be obligated to fund \$503 million in incentives over the next decade – a clearly unsustainable amount.

As far back as 2004, our administration has advocated making modifications to the NBC program because certified teachers are not locating in districts where they could have the greatest impact on improving student achievement in our state. We have consistently advocated for tying the incentive associated with this certification to the teacher's willingness to locate in a critical needs school district – or to teach a critical needs subject. Our position is consistent with a proposal made by the Democratic Leadership Council in its *2004 State and Local Book* when it advocated in a position paper entitled, "Employing Board Certified Teachers Wisely" using the National Board Certification incentive to recruit teachers into the poorest school districts.

To give an example of how the program is not attracting certified teachers to districts that need the most assistance, one need look no further than the disparity in certified teachers in Richland One and Richland Two. In Richland One, 69 percent of students are on free or reduced lunch, and the district has been identified as a "high needs" district, yet only 9 percent of the teachers are NBC Teachers – equating to about 1 certified teacher for every 50 students. On the other hand, in Richland Two, 40 percent of students are on free or reduced lunch, but approximately 25 percent of teachers are NBC – nearly 1 teacher for every 26 students. Richland Two's 412 National Board Certified teachers comprise more than the entire state of Colorado and more than the State of Hawaii and the District of Columbia combined. Other states, such as California and New York, require the NBC teacher to locate in low performing or high poverty schools. If the NBC program is to continue in South Carolina, then the program should require similar commitments from teachers.

For these reasons, we are vetoing and returning without my approval S. 1363, R. 234.

Sincerely,



Mark Sanford